

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2466

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 02824

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: LE, UNSC

SUBJECT: LEBANON: REACTIONS IN UN COMMUNITY TO POSSIBILITY

- OF SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

1. BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS JULY 6, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT WORD THAT THE U.S. WAS CONSULTING SERIOUSLY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING HAD SPREAD BROADLY THROUGH THE COMMUNITY. DURING THE COURSE OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS THAT EVENING, FOR EXAMPLE, POLMIN TALKED WITH CHINESE, MAURITANIAN, LIBYAN, NORWEGIAN AND SWEDISH MISSION REPRESENTATIVES, AS WELL AS SEVERAL UN SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS. THEY ALL BROACHED THE SUBJECT OF OUR MOVES AND WERE EAGER TO KNOW OUR INTENTIONS. NONE OF THEM WERE AT ALL SURPRISED THAT THE U.S. WAS MOVING, BUT MOST OF THEM (ALL BUT MAURITANIA) WARNED THAT A U.S. INITIATIVE IN THE COUNCIL WITHOUT THE FULL AGREEMENT AND COOPERATION OF THE LEBANESE AND SYRIANS WOULD FAIL TO PRODUCE A CONSTRUCTIVE RESULT. MOST OF THEM ASSUMED THAT THE U.S. WAS WELL-AWARE OF THE FACTS OF LIFE IN THE COUNCIL AND DID NOT INTEND TO MOVE UNILATERALLY. THEY WERE COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT THE

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TACTICS THE U.S. HAD ADOPTED, WHICH THEY FELT BY EVENING HAD ALREADY SHOWN GOOD EFFECT IN BEIRUT (SARKIS' RECONSIDERATION OF HIS RESIGNATION, THE LULL IN FIGHTING AND REPORTS THAT NEGOTIATIONS HAD BEGUN).

2. TWO OF THE ABOVE REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE EXCEPTED FROM THE GENERALIZED CHARACTERIZATION OF RESPONSES.

AMBASSADOR EL HASSEN OF MAURITANIA FELT THAT THE U.S. CALL FOR A CEASE-FIRE AND ITS INSTINCT TO INVOLVE THE SECURITY COUNCIL WERE UNDERSTANDABLE AND APPROPRIATE, EVEN IF THERE WAS NO HOPE OF SUCCESS. HE SPOKE OF THE FORCE OF U.S. PRESTIGE IN THE AREA, THE FUNDAMENTAL RESPECT WITH WHICH THE ARAB STATES REGARD THE U.S. AND THE ARAB FRUSTRATION OVER THE COMPLEXITIES AND COSTS OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION. HE NOTED THAT HE IS A MINORITY VOICE, HOWEVER, BECAUSE HE PERSONALLY HAS CONTINUED TO SUPPORT THE SADAT INITIATIVE. HE ADVISED THE U.S. TO APPROACH THE ARAB GROUP INSTITUTIONALLY (TO THE CURRENT GROUP CHAIRMAN, N.YEMEN) IN AN EFFORT TO CONFRONT THE ARABS ONCE AGAIN WITH THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONSTRUCTIVE SOLUTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS SUGGESTION WAS BASED PRIMARILY ON RECOLLECTION THAT THE SYRIAN AND ADF MANDATE HAVE ARAB LEAGUE SPONSORSHIP.

3. THE PRC REPRESENTATIVE, COUNSELLOR CHOU NAN, AFFECTED "SHOCK" THAT ONE OF THE POWERS ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL NOT PARTY TO A CONFLICT WOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO "FORCE" THE ISSUE INTO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HIS REMARKS LED TO A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS PROPOSALS FOR REFORM, CONCERNING WHICH CHOU NAN EXPECTED HIS MISSION TO BE CONSULTED BY SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT BARTON (CANADA) ON JULY 7. WITHOUT TAKING A POSITION ON ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSAL, HE STRONGLY RESISTED THE NOTION THAT EVEN A CONFLICT AS INTENSE AND DANGEROUS TO THE WIDER PEACE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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REGION COULD BE INTRODUCED FOR SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION BY AN OUTSIDE STATE. POLMIN PRESENTED AT SOME LENGTH OUR ARGUMENTS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN PREVENTING OR DEALING WITH SUCH PROBLEMS, BUT CHOU NAN PERSISTED WITH HIS ARGUMENT THAT THE COUNCIL CAN ACT ONLY WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE PARTIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT. HE CLAIMED FURTHERMORE THAT "NINETY PER CENT" OF THE MEMBERS OF THE UN WOULD AGREE FULLY THAT THEIR PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO HEADLINING AT THE "WHIM" OF OUTSIDE POWERS WHO MAY HAVE VARYING INTERESTS IN STIMULATING PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND NEGOTIATIONS OF SUCH A PROBLEM. LEONARD

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